

Current Considerations for Next Steps Related to Action Agenda Performance Management
Puget Sound Partnership staff reflections
January 21, 2010

The following observations are derived from staff reflection on the 2009 work on this topic, and broadly address the application of the Open Standards framework to the Action Agenda, the informal feedback we received during that application, and the comments we received in response to the November 2009 technical memoranda related to this topic. It is intend to help inform our work planning and adaptations to work in progress.

- The Open Standards framework is viewed favorably as a tool to organize development of the performance management system.
- Elements of the Open Standards framework need to be adapted to better fit the institutional setting and management context of the Puget Sound Partnership and Puget Sound. For example, the framework is not robust enough in the area of integrating human dimensions into the consideration of targets and threats; the standard definitions of threats need to be further adapted to the local circumstances; and the assessment of program efficacy in addressing threats as part of the threat rating exercise needs to be more nuanced and the results of the assessment should be more apparent in the ratings. The results of a program efficacy assessment should also be factored into the prioritization of strategies
- Regional scale application of the Open Standards framework results in a regional perspective on important matters like threats, key components of the ecosystem, and strategies. A sub-regional (watershed, Action Area, or other) application would likely result in perspectives that enhance or differ from the regional perspective. To the extent that a sub-regional application – adding sub-regional perspective – would be essential to crafting strategies that improve the certainty of reaching the 2020 goals it should be undertaken.
- The schedule and work flow for the work needs adjustment. Too much happens in parallel that should be happening in sequence. Reverse engineering the Action Agenda to conform to the Open Standards complicates this problem, because much of the content that would emerge from a traditional Open Standards process has already been created and is driving implementation.
- Opportunities for engagement in the work need to be made with more notice and to a more complete set of people who have the expertise and knowledge to contribute

appropriately to specific tasks. This is particularly important given the complexity of the subject matter, the policy-science relationships explicit or implied in most Action Agenda performance management issues, and the Partnership's intense institutional demands.

- The incorporation of science into the work needs to be more transparent and to happen on a predictable schedule to allow for project planning and for timely inputs into decision making processes. This issue must be addressed in the immediate term to ensure the Puget Sound Science Update, which many view as a seminal science product in the implementation of the Action Agenda, is appropriately scoped, developed, vetted, and translated for policy development purposes. The decision processes the science should be geared toward include budget development, assessment of Action Agenda progress and effectiveness, and adaptation and prioritization of strategies.
- The Cross-Partnership Work Group concept, as tested in 2009 in convening the group on performance management, is a valuable method for focusing work and engaging LC, SP, and ECB members on tasks that need their engagement. Additional staff work between meetings, e.g., to keep group members up to speed and primed to take up their role, may be needed to maximize the effectiveness of these Work Groups.
- The pervasive effects of probable and potential climate change scenarios needs to be directly integrated into the current development of the performance management system. They have clear implications for setting quantifiable targets, the magnitude of and interaction among threats, and the efficacy of strategies. If climate change is indeed a “very high” threat it has to be better integrated into the work.
- The processes for setting indicators, components and ecological attributes need to at least be better explained, but likely need to be aligned into a single project with clear objectives and implementation roles (for PSP staff, the Science Panel, and technical experts). These topic areas have obvious conceptual overlaps but to date have been addressed somewhat discretely, contributing to confusion and potential duplication of work.

Action Agenda Assessment and Adaptation Conceptual Approach

Inputs

- *State of the Sound 20XX*
- *Action Agenda 20XX: priorities, strategies and actions, incorporating revisions to the previous version(s)*

- *Current Open Standards application products: components/ attributes, threat definitions and ratings/tiers, action outputs, threat reduction objectives, component objectives*
- *Science synthesis document (this could be post-2010 iterations of the Science Update)*
- *Monitoring program products: addressing action outputs, threat objectives, component objectives*
- *Current reporting Indicators (distinguished from the broader set of components, attributes, or indicators being tracked)*
- *Action Tracking results*

Process

Action Agenda performance assessment

Outputs

- State of the Sound 20XX+2*
- Action Agenda 20XX+2: priorities, strategies and actions, incorporating revisions to the previous version(s)*
- Biennial Science Work Plan 20XX+2*
- Budget guidance*
- Program guidance*

Puget Sound Partnership

Overview of 2010 Action Agenda, Performance Management, and State Budget Estimates Next Steps

Prepared for January 22, 2010 Cross-Partnership Work Group meeting

Background

The Partnership's enabling statute requires the Leadership Council to undertake significant responsibilities related to performance management and accountability. These include:

1. Providing progress reports (RCW 90.71. 230 (a))
2. Setting strategic priorities and benchmarks (RCW 90.71. 230 (a))
3. Adopting and Applying accountability measures (RCW 90.71. 230 (a))
4. Maintain complete and consolidated financial information (RCW 90.71. 230 (i))
5. Involving the public and implementing entities, develop standards and processes to determine whether implementing entities are taking actions consistent and in compliance with the Action Agenda (RCW 90.71. 350)

In addition, state agencies responsible for implementing the Action Agenda are to provide to the Partnership by June 1 of each even-numbered year their estimates of the actions and the budget needed in the forthcoming biennium to implement their portion of the Action Agenda. State agencies are also required to work with the Partnership in developing biennial budget requests to achieve consistency with the Action Agenda and to be submitted to the Governor for consideration in the biennial budget process (RCW 90.71.320).

To meet these requirements the Partnership began developing a performance framework in 2009 using the Open Standards for Conservation. Many stakeholders, including tribes, government agencies, and interest groups participated in development and review of interim work products. The Partnership also collected financial information on state agency estimated budgets to implement Near Term Actions in the Action Agenda as it completed the 2009 State of the Sound report.

2010 work

In 2010, the Partnership plans to further develop significant portions of the performance management system with six related products. These are:

1. **Finalize a list of ecosystem components.** This work is needed to help conducting the threat ratings, select ecosystem reporting indicators, and set ecosystem outcome targets.
2. **Finalize the groupings of Puget Sound threats:** This work is needed so that the Partnership can select threats for which to develop threat reduction objectives and targets.
3. **Develop a short list of threat reduction objectives with targets and benchmarks for several important threats to the Puget Sound ecosystem**

(number needs to be determined). This work will also include completing the results chains started in 2009.

4. Set performance measures for 2009-11 Near-Term Actions:

- 5. Provide state agency budget and cost estimating guidance:** This will include
- a. Guidance to state agencies so that budgets and decision packages for the 2011-13 biennium are directed toward the ecosystem components, achieving the threat reduction objectives, and high priority threat groups. Other agencies can use this information as well.
 - a. Information on how to prepare cost estimates for the Action Agenda per RCW 90.71.320
 - b. Other Information specific to 2011-13 State budget preparation

Products from this work will also used to:

1. Systematically show the links between budgets, planning, research, and actions to inform setting priorities and allocating resources to most effectively reduce threats and improve the condition of Puget Sound.
2. Provide information necessary to guide future revisions to the Action Agenda
3. Help justify agency programs, approaches and budgets related to Puget Sound recovery to OFM, the Governor's Office, the state legislature, and the EPA.
4. Provide interim reports to the Partnership's Leadership Council on progress in implementing near term actions.
5. Complete the 2011 State of the Sound Report.

Cross-Partnership Work Group roles, process, and timeline

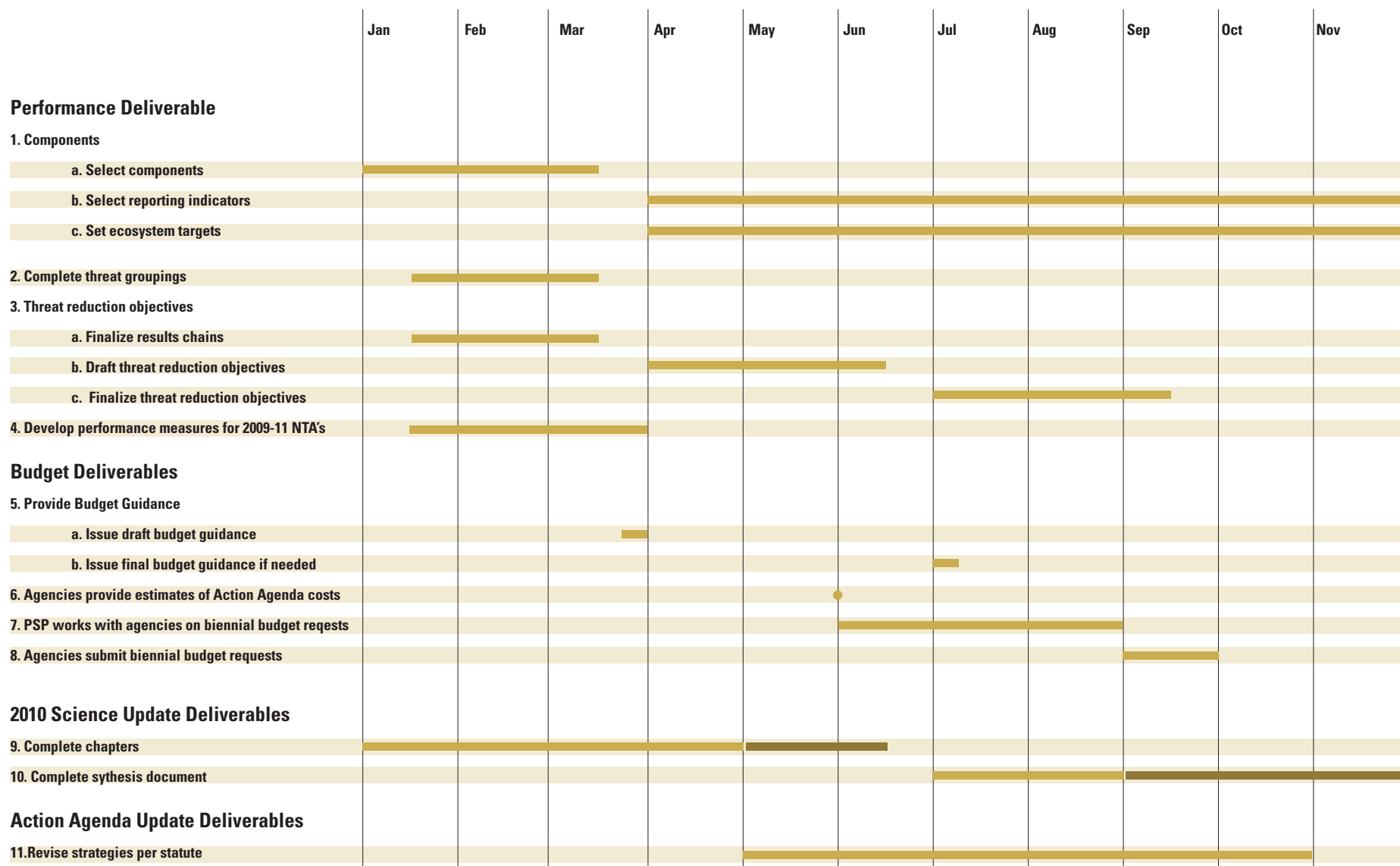
In 2010, the Leadership will be asked to make several near- and longer-term decisions on:

- a. Agreement to use the list of ecosystem components, guidance which ecosystem components for which to develop objectives and targets, and eventual approval of targets
- b. The groupings of threats to Puget Sound, guidance on which threats for which to develop threat reduction objectives and targets, and approval of threat reduction objectives and targets.

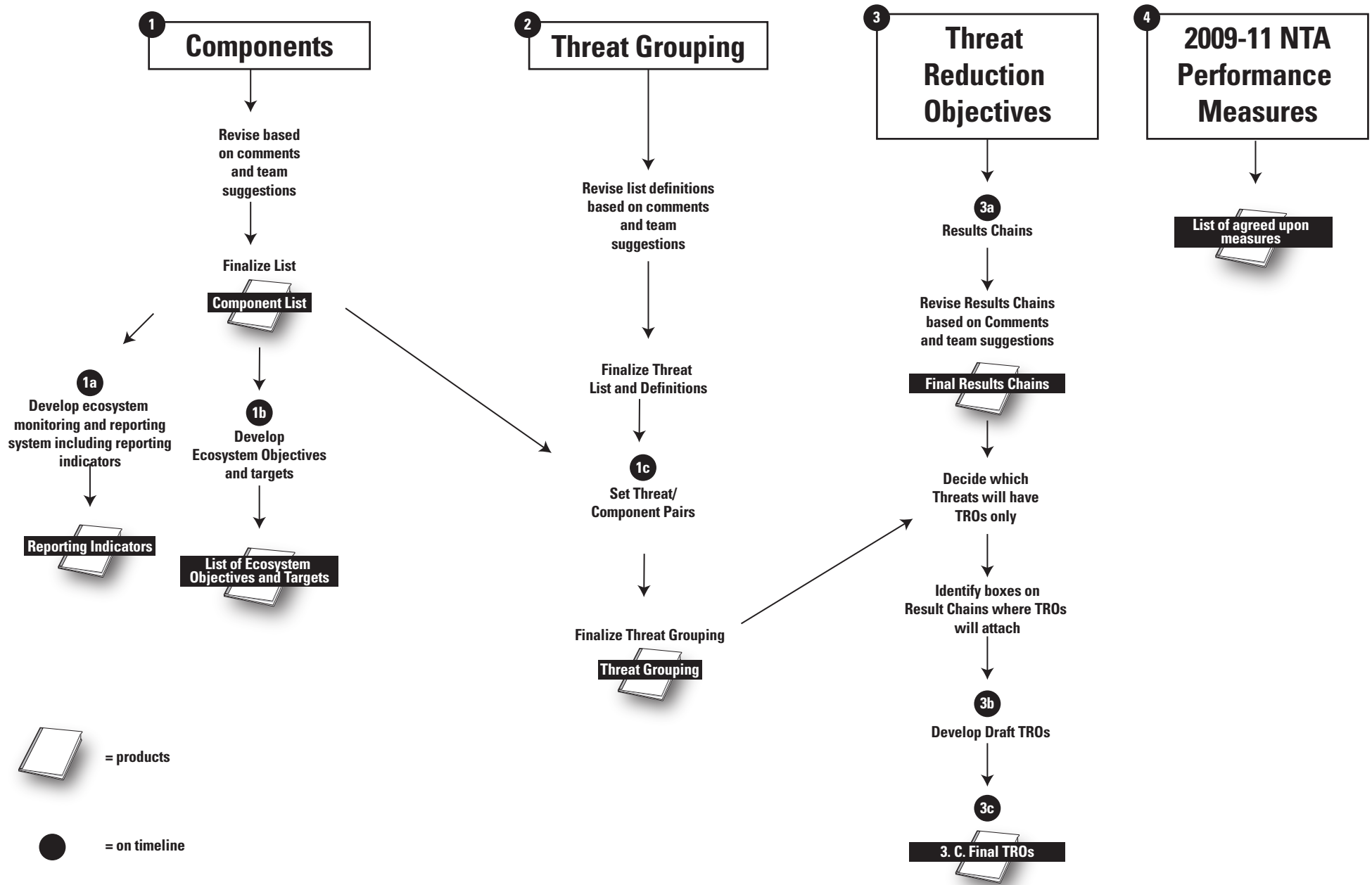
The Cross Partnership Work Groups on Performance Management and Threats to the Ecosystem will help give input to and advise the Leadership Council. Participation in the Cross-Partnership work groups is very important. Recommendations about the components and the final threat groupings will be discussed at the March Leadership Council meeting. Work on the threat reduction objectives will begin in earnest starting in April. Staff anticipates that the Leadership Council will discuss drafts threat reduction objectives in June and make a final decision in September. Ecosystem targets will be ideally be decided upon by the end of the 2010.

There is a longer handout that explains each of the products and timing.

2010 Timeline for Action Agenda, Performance Management System and Budget Guidance Next Steps



2010 Performance Management Products and Work Flow



Purpose

The Partnership has formed five small, cross-Partnership groups. These groups are informal and advisory, and will meet as needed to focus on specific high-level guidance and directional questions. These advisory groups will:

- Serve as a sounding board for staff
- Focus science efforts on key policy questions
- Advance science-policy discussions
- Support cross-board coordination

Roles, Scope and Operations

- Partnership staff will organize the meetings; groups will be convened and meet as needed.
- Staff will bring discussion items, specific ideas and questions to the groups for guidance. Relevant issues may also be referred by the LC, SP and ECB.
- These groups will not make decisions, and will not maintain formal proceedings. Staff will maintain summary notes.
- As appropriate, any recommendations will be brought forward to the Leadership Council, Ecosystem Coordination Board, Science Panel, and/or to external groups assisting with work.
- Members of the groups are expected to contribute to related discussions at the Leadership Council, Ecosystem Coordination Board, and Science Panel meetings.

Group Structure

1. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

Staff Lead: David St. John/Martha Neuman 206.296.8003/360.464.2005

Proposed Membership

Leadership Council: Diana Gale, Martha Kongsgaard, Steve Sakuma

ECB: Ted Sturdevant (alt. Josh Baldi), Tom Eaton (alt. Michael Rylko), Jacques White, Councilman Dave Somers (alt. Neil Aaland), Senator Phil Rockefeller

Science Panel: Trina Wellman, Bill Labiosa, (alt. Tom Leschine)

2. THREATS TO ECOSYSTEM HEALTH

Staff Lead: Scott Redman 360.725.5448

Proposed Membership

Leadership Council: Bill Wilkerson, Dan O'Neal

ECB: Dave Herrera, Ken Berg (alt. Mary Mahaffy), Bill Dewey, Commissioner Peter Goldmark (alt. Bridget Moran or Naki Stevens), Commissioner Steve Bauer

Science Panel: Jan Newton, Bob Johnston, (alt. Joe Gaydos)

3. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Staff Lead: Chris Townsend 360.464.2007

Proposed Membership

Leadership Council: Steve Sakuma, Billy Frank Jr. (alt. Terry Wright), Bill Ruckelshaus

ECB: Commissioner Steve Tharinger (alt. Commissioner Steve Bauer), Sam Anderson, Barry Thom, Ted Sturdevant (alt. Josh Baldi), Dave Herrera, Dave Peeler

Science Panel: John Stark, Joel Baker (alt. Bob Johnston)

4. SOCIAL AND OUTREACH STRATEGIES

Staff Lead: Lynda Ransley/Frank Mendizabal 360.464.2014/360.725.5466

Proposed Membership

Leadership Council: Martha Kongsgaard, Bill Wilkerson, Dan O'Neal

ECB: Jacques White, Teri King, Bill Dewey, Randy Kinley

Science Panel: Trina Wellman, Tom Leschine, (alt. Usha Varanasi)

5. FINANCE AND FUNDING

Staff Lead: Jim Cahill 360.754.5440

Proposed Membership

Leadership Council: Diana Gale, Dan O'Neal

ECB: David Troutt, Ken Berg, Commissioner Peter Goldmark (alt. Bridget Moran, Naki Stevens), Councilwoman Jeanne Burbidge, Jacques White, local govt TBD

Science Panel: Tim Quinn, Joel Baker

TOPICS / FOCUS

1. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

Possible Topics:

- Ecosystem indicators
- Intermediate outcomes
- Action accountability
- Ecosystem monitoring
- Adaptive Management
- Ecosystem and action reporting
- Puget Sound Science Update

2. THREATS TO ECOSYSTEM HEALTH

Possible Topics:

- Identification of geographic distribution of threats and identification of magnitude of threats and urgency
- Identification of links between threats to the condition of specific species, habitats, water quality, freshwater flows, and human health and well-being.
- Investigations that link indicators of health to strategies

Near-term specifics could include:

- Integrated Ecosystem Assessment work related to estimating spatial distribution and magnitude of threats
- Watershed characterizations
- Ecosystem conceptual models
- Key questions for the toxics loading inventory
- Key questions for nutrient and dissolved oxygen modeling
- Evaluation of priorities for stormwater retrofits
- Revisions to Topic Forum papers

3. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Possible Topics:

- Use of toxic loading inventory to guide loadings reduction strategies
- Advice about resolution of floodplain management and levee maintenance
- Input on scenario development (e.g., IEA modeling related to land use and stormwater management)
- Input on advanced wastewater treatment strategies based on synthesis of nutrient loading, dissolved oxygen modeling, and technology assessments
- Integration of PSNERP and NOAA IEA modeling projects and tasks with other Partnership work.

4. SOCIAL AND OUTREACH STRATEGIES

Possible Topics:

- Social strategies for Action Agenda implementation
- Strategies, structures, and capacity for regional outreach and stewardship
- Synthesis of appropriate social science and market research
- Justification of BMPs
- Evaluation metrics for outreach
- Targeted and accurate messages

5. FINANCE AND FUNDING

Possible Topics:

- Long-term funding strategies
- Allocation strategies for federal funding
- Financial strategy

Cross-Partnership Work Group Structure

1. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK - Staff Lead: David St. John/Martha Neuman 206.296.8003/360.464.2005

Proposed Membership

Leadership Council: Diana Gale, Martha Kongsgaard, Steve Sakuma

ECB: Ted Sturdevant (alt. Josh Baldi), Tom Eaton (alt. Michael Rylko), Jacques White, Councilman Dave Somers (alt. Neil Aaland), Senator Phil Rockefeller

Science Panel: Trina Wellman, Bill Labiosa, (alt. Tom Leschine)

2. THREATS TO ECOSYSTEM HEALTH - Staff Lead: Scott Redman 360.725.5448

Proposed Membership

Leadership Council: Bill Wilkerson, Dan O'Neal

ECB: Dave Herrera, Ken Berg (alt. Mary Mahaffy), Bill Dewey, Commissioner Peter Goldmark (alt. Bridget Moran or Naki Stevens), Commissioner Steve Bauer

Science Panel: Jan Newton, Bob Johnston, (alt. Joe Gaydos)

3. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES - Staff Lead: Chris Townsend 360.464.2007

Proposed Membership

Leadership Council: Steve Sakuma, Billy Frank Jr. (alt. Terry Wright), Bill Ruckelshaus

ECB: Commissioner Steve Tharinger (alt. Commissioner Steve Bauer), Sam Anderson, Barry Thom, Ted Sturdevant (alt. Josh Baldi), Dave Herrera, Dave Peeler

Science Panel: John Stark, Joel Baker (alt. Bob Johnston)

4. SOCIAL AND OUTREACH STRATEGIES - Staff Lead: Lynda Ransley/Frank Mendizabal 360.464.2014/360.725.5466

Proposed Membership

Leadership Council: Martha Kongsgaard, Bill Wilkerson, Dan O'Neal

ECB: Jacques White, Teri King, Bill Dewey, Randy Kinley

Science Panel: Trina Wellman, Tom Leschine, (alt. Usha Varanasi)

5. FINANCE AND FUNDING - Staff Lead: Jim Cahill 360.754.5440

Proposed Membership

Leadership Council: Diana Gale, Dan O'Neal

ECB: David Troutt, Ken Berg, Commissioner Peter Goldmark (alt. Bridget Moran, Naki Stevens), Councilwoman Jeanne Burbidge, Jacques White, local govt TBD

Science Panel: Tim Quinn, Joel Baker